

Erasmus+ Report: Previous Experience of Orutindo e.V.

Section A: Non-formal Tools and Practices

Section B: Challenges in Engaging Marginalized Youth

A. Effective Non-Formal Tools and Practices

Orutindo e.V. has consistently utilized innovative and inclusive non-formal education (NFE) approaches to support marginalized youth, both in Uganda and Germany. Before the organization became involved in the Mosaic of Minds initiatives, its experience was already rooted in applied fieldwork, with significant impacts in local communities.

1. Experience in Uganda – Orutindo Kids Programme:

In Uganda, Orutindo e.V. worked directly with orphaned children, street youth, and those who had experienced abuse or abandonment from their relatives or communities. The organization implemented:

- **Participatory arts-based methods** (drama, music, storytelling): These encouraged self-expression, confidence, and emotional healing.
- **Life skills workshops** using play-based pedagogy and peer-to-peer methods to foster problem-solving, resilience, and communication.
- **Community engagement** strategies, including family reintegration counselling and mentorship from local role models.
- **Outdoor experiential learning** (farm work, nature trips, football competition games) to teach responsibility, collaboration, and environmental awareness.

These methods promoted psycho-social development, built community bonds, and reconnected the children with a sense of purpose and belonging.

2. Experience in Germany – Migrant and Refugee Youth Workshops:

In Germany, Orutindo e.V. designed and led non-formal education initiatives targeted at youth from migrant and refugee backgrounds as well as young people from families in crisis. Key practices included:

- **Intercultural dialogue workshops**, encouraging youth to share and reflect on personal and cultural narratives.
- **Theater and role-play formats**, especially Forum Theatre, enabling youth to explore conflict resolution and identity.
- **Collaborative project-based learning**, such as cooking events, media production, and community mapping, enhancing soft skills and social integration.
- **Peer leadership programs**, training older or more experienced participants to become facilitators.

These activities created a safe, inclusive space for learning, empowered participants to take agency over their learning, and fostered intercultural understanding.

B. Challenges in Engaging Marginalized Youth

Despite many successes, Orutindo e.V. also encountered several challenges in its work with marginalized youth populations.

1. In Uganda:

- **Trust-building** with traumatized or abused children required sustained, sensitive engagement. It is so hard to build back trust that has been destroyed from their near ones. It is a long process which requires patience from both the youth themselves and the youth workers.
- **Limited access to resources**, including qualified staff, facilities, and materials, sometimes constrained program delivery.
- **Community stigma** around street children and orphans made reintegration and broader community support more difficult. We also have orphaned children which are have HIV/AIDs given to them by their children after birth. These kids are often so stigmatized from their peers, community. Medical care for them is also expensive because they need special attention.
- **Security and stability** concerns in some regions occasionally disrupted planned activities. This problem also affected some youth personally, causing a hopeless longing for their homeland, relatives etc. We had this problem with the youth refugees from Congo.

2. In Germany:

- **Language barriers** limited participation at first, requiring adaptation of tools and translation support.
- **Institutional resistance** from some school systems or authorities to support informal youth workshops. Some schools made it so bureaucratic to access the youth since they were the best address to reach them.
- **Unstable housing or legal status** among refugee youth impacted attendance and continuity. This also made it difficult sometimes for Orutindo e.V. to access with ease.
- **Mental health concerns**, often unspoken or undiagnosed, presented challenges in group dynamics and required sensitive facilitation.

Conclusion

Orutindo e.V. has developed and applied a diverse array of non-formal educational methods that have proven effective in deeply complex social settings. The organization's dual experience in Uganda and Germany has equipped it with a unique, intercultural perspective on youth empowerment. However, we also acknowledge that dealing with the youth is and should not be a one time project based on short term projects but a continuous life long engagement. The lessons learnt from different engagements with the youth continue to inform Orutindo e.V's current and future participation in Erasmus+ programs, particularly in the Mosaic of Minds initiative.